DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI: Sir, this project has been pending for the last four years and, as you know, this Government came into power only nine months ago. This Government is taking a lot of initiatives and we are delegating more and more powers to the States. We recently discussed this project in the sub-committee. Only the day before yesterday, we discussed it in the Cabinet also. A sub-committee has been constituted. After finalisation of the PPA and resolution of differences between the two Ministries, this will be finalised at the earliest. Sir, this Government is committed to generation, transmission and distribution of power.

DR. Y. LAKSHMI PRASAD: Sir, I want to have a specific clarification. When are they going to start it and how much time will they take?

DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI: Sir, after the approval of the Cabinet, we want to commence the project.

PROF. RAM KAPSE: Hon. Chairman, Sir, the Prime Minister has announced that hereafter they will not clear new private projects. So, what is the position about this project? Do you consider it for clearnance? I would also like to ask whether an increase in the efficiency of the power houses could also help or would you like to increase the efficiency by increasing the number of plants.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Question Hour is over.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO STARRED QUESTIONS

Enquiry into working of Oil Selection Boards

*182. SHRI SURINDER KUMAR SINGLA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICKHAR:

Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government propose to make a high level enquiry into the working of Oil Selection Boards (OSBs) functioning for the last five years;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether Government have received compalints of corruption against the OSBs; and

(d) if so, the steps proposed to be taken to enquire into those complaints

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM & NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU):

(a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise

(c) Complaints have been received against the selections made by some of the Oil Selection Boards including their alleged indulgence in irregularities and malpractices.

(d) Tenure of the Chairman and the Members of such Boards had been terminated by Government owing to their unsatisfactory performance. A Public Interest Litigation has already been filed in the High Court of Delhi. The complaints/ allegations are being looked into by the Court and the matter is subjudice. Operation of the OSBs is presently in abeyance.

Oil and gas reserves in Mahanadi Basin

*186. SHRIMATI JAYANTI PATNAIK: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleasd to state:

(a) when the last assessment of oil and natural gas reserves in the Mahanadi Basin in Orissa was made;

(b) the details of the findings thereof; and

(c) the reasons why exploration of oil or natural gas has not been started in the river basin.

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) to (c) During the period 1978-90 Oil